

VZCZCXRO6468  
RR RUEHROV  
DE RUEHDJ #0436 1271437  
ZNY CCCCC ZZH  
R 061437Z MAY 08  
FM AMEMBASSY DJIBOUTI  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 9225  
INFO RUCNIAD/IGAD COLLECTIVE

C O N F I D E N T I A L DJIBOUTI 000436

SIPDIS

DS/IP/AF, DS/IP/ITA, DS/IP/SPC/SO, AF/E

E.O. 12958: DECL: 05/06/2018

TAGS: [ASEC](#) [DJ](#) [MOPS](#) [PTER](#) [SO](#)

SUBJECT: DJIBOUTI EAC: IMPLICATIONS OF SOMALIA AIR STRIKES

Classified By: RSO Ellen Tannor for reasons 1.4 (d)

¶1. (C) On May 5, 2008, Djibouti's Emergency Action Committee (EAC) met to discuss possible security implications in Djibouti from a U.S. air strike in Somalia that killed al-Shabaab leader Aden Hashi Ayrow. The EAC was led by DCM and attended by RSO, ORA, USLO, CJTF-HOA CCE, PD, POL/ECON, IMO, MGT, USAID and visiting AF/E Desk Officer.

¶2. (C) RSO briefed EAC on the April 30 air strike in Somalia and the Al-Shabaab target that was eliminated. RSO noted that al-Shabaab members had vowed to take revenge on Americans and American interests. DCM reviewed press guidance on the strike, but it was noted that conventional wisdom would lead people to believe the strike was carried out from Djibouti, host to the only U.S. military base in Africa. RSO noted that local sources and staff have noted rising anti-U.S. sentiment since the air strike, duly exacerbated by a large influx of refugees and immigrants from southern Somalia. It was stated that most Djiboutians are ethnic Somalis and empathetic to their Somali neighbors ravaged by war and instability.

¶3. (C) RSO and ORA briefed the EAC on Djibouti's hosting of talks between Somalia's Transitional Federal Government (TFG) and the Alliance for the Re-Liberation of Somalia (ARS) commencing in Djibouti on May 10. It is noted that Somali leaders, possibly members of the deposed Somali Council of Islamic Courts (CIC) or (ARS) accompanied by armed security members will be staying at the Imperial Hotel, which is located less than one mile away from the Embassy compound. This hotel is not used by the Embassy but is currently used by military personnel at CJTF-HOA who take their 96-hours pass off base. As this hotel was recently given a poor ranking by the U.S. CENTCOM vulnerability assessment team, coupled with the anticipated guests, EAC agreed RSO would make a recommendation to the Executive Officer at Camp Lemonier not to utilize this hotel for security reasons.

¶4. (C) The EAC also discussed the recent border dispute between Eritrea and Djibouti and agreed that this situation was unlikely to result in military action as the Government of Djibouti (GoDJ) is actively engaged in talks with Eritrea. GoDJ has also taken this issue to both the African Union and United Nations, who have both publicly urged restraint and diplomacy.

¶5. (C) RSO reviewed the Embassy's security posture and the EAC deemed it sufficient as the Embassy has been on heightened alert for several months due to various security concerns in the region. Currently, the Embassy is engaged in Random Anti-Terrorist Measures (RAMs) with the Marines at Camp Lemonier. Both SD and Mobile Patrol have increased and varied patrols and rotations; host government police, who secure the outer perimeter, are on heightened alert. RSO briefed EAC on the need to act as their own best surveillance detection given the amount of new refugees and immigrants from southern Somalia now taking solace in Djibouti, and in

and around Emboff residential neighborhoods. The EAC agreed that a warden message was not necessary at this time, and that current travel warnings are sufficient.

16. (C) Point of contact for this report is RSO Ellen Tannor, (253) 353-995, IVG 597 2307.  
SYMINGTON